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The pandemic has represented an extraordinary medical challenge with massive economic and societal impacts. Despite this, it has led to significant scientific breakthroughs and created collaborations between academics, universities and industry to a level that has not been seen before. It has forced the development of necessary infrastructure and behavioural change that may have taken a decade to achieve at any other time. The Spending Review should not now ignore the key role played by the IVD sector in population health and biosecurity. BIVDA is calling for this Spending Review to invest in those same enablers to support the UK diagnostic sector's capacity to tackle care backlogs, drive innovation and prepare for potential future pandemics.

We recommend these requests to enable development of our critical industry sector for funding in this Spending Review:

1. A stronger UK industry base

Long term investment in scalable advanced manufacturing and a consolidated testing strategy will utilise the manufacturing capacity of the UK as we emerge from the pandemic, create high value jobs, realise our export potential and encourage global companies to invest resources into the UK.

Diagnostic companies and their communities across the UK should receive investment through regional projects such as the Northern Powerhouse, the Government's 'Levelling Up' agenda and both regional and national SME funding programmes.

Expanding the Medicines and Diagnostics Manufacturing Transformation Fund and building on the Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (ILAP) and Digital Innovative Licensing and Access Pathway (DILAP) will invite further capability.

Investment in the institutions enabling world leading innovation and manufacturing for resource and capacity such as NIHR, NICE, MHRA, Academic Health Science Networks (AHSNs) and Accelerated Access Collaborative (AAC) is required to increase capability to fast track IVD products from UK companies.

2. Boosting investment in Innovation & IVD Uptake

BIVDA welcomes the £22 billion per year Government investment in R&D and urges that the mechanisms which facilitated innovation and rapid IVD uptake during the pandemic are maintained¹. For example, the AAC and NHS funding mandate for diagnostics and devices.

The MHRA and NICE merit comprehensive funding for agile and robust frameworks which attract both domestic and foreign private investment in the sector.

Fast track approvals for new diagnostics and digital technologies should continue to give the UK strong systems for dealing infectious disease and future potential pandemic preparedness.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/beis-research-and-development-rd-budget-allocations-2020-to-2021>

The industry is crucial to the DHSC's commitments on population health, increased data leverage and supporting the life sciences industry. Investment to ensure that Digital and Data strategy is defined to ensure UK competitive advantage in terms of innovative technologies and income into the UK related to IP and data.

Research and Development tax credits should be redesigned to facilitate growth and increase access to external capital.

The industry calls for the appointment of a National Clinical Director for Diagnostics to oversee all aspects of the IVD industry, from innovation to procurement, including academia, private sector and industry engagement.

3. Increased Spending on Early Diagnosis

Too many patients are now living with undiagnosed diseases owing to the pandemic. With recognition of the challenge to catch up and provide the level of healthcare the population requires, the Chancellor should fully back the sector's capacity to address this.

As just 2 examples, during the crisis, testing for anaemia dropped by 29%, and PSA for prostate cancer fell by 17%².

Achieving goals on early detection of diseases cannot be done without more funding for R&D, clinical trials, access and innovation.

The UK is already a world leader in genomic sequencing and should be ready to capitalize on this skill whenever needed in future. Investment in programmes in mass screening, cancer genomics, AMR and mass population testing within the Lighthouse Laboratories to enhance population health and allow NHS laboratories to deliver comprehensive core laboratory services for patients is needed.

Laboratories should be fully equipped with cutting-edge technologies to respond to public health needs for future resilience. The Health Infrastructure Plan might provide insight into funding strategies.

There is scope for incentivising GPs, and hospital labs to take up innovative early detection methods and diagnostic tools. The primary barrier to this is a lack of finance. The NHS should receive investment to enable delivery of clinical research and support clinical pathway re-design to become an early adopter of innovative diagnostic technologies.

4. Higher Level Programmes to Grow UK's IVD Workforce

The Government should invest in an R&D workforce with a range of different skills, experiences and training, drawing on the contribution of individuals from diverse backgrounds. Training to create a highly skilled workforce will enable the realisation of our previously stated points (a stronger UK base, innovation, early diagnosis, IVD uptake).

² <https://www.hospitaltimes.co.uk/dont-wait-act-on-early-diagnosis/>

Upskilling of life sciences and diagnostic workers should be realised through PhD programmes delivered through associations, apprenticeships, and a focus on STEM-based, life science degrees.

Investment is needed in training and upskilling public procurement professionals to ensure future pandemic preparedness and application of procurement strategy to deliver the Government Life Sciences Vision and supply chain resilience to avoid the issues experienced at the outset of the Pandemic and the readjustment of future supply chains after leaving the EU.

We are pleased to see £22.5 million invested into the Collaborative Training Partnerships (CTP) to address skills gaps in the UK bioscience industry³. Investment in manufacturing and production, a highly-skilled workforce is crucial to underpin a stronger UK industry base.

Funding should increase in training people in all disciplines related to the IVD sector on how to leverage, access data and achieving sustainability targets.

5. Guidance and Incentives for Sustainable Transformation

It is clear that funding is required in supporting the sustainable transformation of the IVD Sector in both procurement and operations in order to meet the NHS's Net Zero goal by 2040.

NHS and DHSC should be allocated resources to resource and provide the clearest guidance possible on new supplier requirements such as Carbon Reduction Plans and the Government's Social Value Model.

Dedicated training programmes on carbon emission reduction, reusable materials and chemical safety must be delivered to IVD sector leaders.

Conclusion

IVDs inform around 70% of clinical decisions, yet they receive less than 1% of the total NHS budget; this needs to change⁴ to realise the desire to have better health through prevention and early diagnosis while supporting public health against the threat of infectious disease and antimicrobial resistance.

From early detection of disease to pandemic preparedness, the diagnostic community has the capacity to protect the economic and physical health of the UK, but this requires a talented workforce, solid manufacturing, capacity for innovation and environmental transformation.

³ <https://www.ukri.org/news/bio-researchers-of-the-future-get-22-5-million-boost/>

⁴ [BIVDA's 'Emerging from the Pandemic' Strategy Paper.](#)